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*On the HOUSE ACCOMMODATION of ENGLAND and WALES, with
REFERENCE to the CENSUS of 1871. By ROBERT HARRY INGLIS
PALGRAVE, ESQ.*

[Read before the Statistical Society, 21st December, 1869.]

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THE social condition of the population of this country has frequently been investigated by many and competent observers. Among other names, those of Arthur Young, Cobbett, Miss Martineau, Chalmers, Porter, and Kay Shuttleworth, show how great and how varied has been the ability employed in the task. All those just named may, in some degree, be termed amateurs. Each one noted, and remarked on, the points of special interest to himself. In more recent times carefully selected and highly qualified official observers have been appointed by the Government to the duty. Dr. Simon, Dr. Farr, Mr. Baker, and the Rev. James Frazer, to single out a few names, are worthy to be placed in the same line with the best known of their predecessors. To the reports made by such observers, the writer of the following pages has been greatly indebted. In acknowledging this obligation, he desires also to mention that a wish to give a complete authority for the statements made, has sometimes led him to avail himself of the very words in which the statement was given. In all practicable cases a reference has been added. But, although much information on many subjects connected with the condition of the population is to be gathered from these reports, and from other similar sources, to which, from want of space, it has been impossible to refer in detail, there is one rather important point on which our information is deficient. No adequate data yet exist for a complete and systematic investigation of the condition of the population, as to house accommodation, when regarded family by family.

To defer any attempt at investigation till this deficiency is supplied might be altogether undesirable. "An author who waits

“till all requisite materials are accumulated to his hands, is but “watching the stream that will run on for ever.” And though Mr. Hallam’s fame rests mainly on other grounds than ordinary statistical research, yet the social condition of the population was far from being forgotten by him; the early numbers of the Statistical Society’s *Journal* show that the house accommodation of the mass of the metropolitan population had not escaped his attention, or failed to call out his sympathy.

I.—*Existing Information, Extent and Deficiencies.*

The materials on most points are abundant. The only difficulty at first sight appears to be that of selection. Yet, as mentioned, there is a portion of the subject on which the information available is very scanty. The *quality* of the house accommodation of the United Kingdom, is as yet but scantily investigated. Existing statistics do not present any adequate information on this part of the question. The general average for the kingdom is given; the average for each county, each town, each village, is easily ascertainable. But here the information stops short. It is impossible to investigate further with any certainty, and to learn even approximately *how* individual families are housed. Endeavours have been made to unravel this point from the materials now accessible. And the results of some of these endeavours will be found in the following pages. But the best service which they can render is to show how little can yet be known.

And yet this subject is one of great interest. The important part which it plays in the social condition of the people cannot be doubted. But, as far as can be traced, while a vast expansion has taken place on many other points; while progress has been made in many other respects, house accommodation has remained almost stationary. Down to the present time it appears to have improved but slightly since the commencement of the century, even if there has been any real improvement at all since 1801. That date is not chosen for any other reason than because it is a convenient landmark, and the point whence authentic information on the subject commences. Before that time many ingenious estimates, like those of Sir William Petty* and the Rev. John Howlett,† were made, but these are at best uncertain grounds to base any calculation on; and no reliable data exist before the actual enumerations which commenced in 1801. It may, however, be observed in passing, that Mr. Howlett’s estimate of $5\frac{2}{3}$ as the average number of persons

* “Several Essays in Political Arithmetick,” by Sir William Petty, Knt.: London, 1755.

† “An Examination of Dr. Price’s Essay on the Population of England and “Wales,” by Rev. John Howlett, A.B.: Maidstone, 1781.

in a house, in 1780, was more favourable than the state shown to exist by the investigations of twenty years later. If Mr. Howlett's estimate was correct, the deterioration which followed 1780 may correspond with the depression in the condition of the labouring population of this country at the close of the last century, noticed by Mr. Porter,* by Mr. Rogers,† and commented on by that indefatigable observer Arthur Young.‡

Mr. Porter has made the following statement in the opening of the chapter on Inhabited Houses, in the "Progress of the Nation :—" "The number of houses in a district will usually bear the same "relative proportion to the number of its inhabitants at one period "that it has borne at another." This might certainly be expected to be the case where a country has passed into a stationary state. In a country in which the density of population, the relative proportion of wealth to individual inhabitants, of imports and exports, of all the circumstances which tend to form the life of a nation, remain unaltered. But is this similarity of proportion between the number of inhabitants and their dwellings to be expected to remain permanent in a society undergoing continual change? It may be said, the place where a man lives and the style of his house are both matters in which he is free to choose. That if more houses, that if a better class of houses were required, they would be provided. In short, that in this case the supply would be equal to the demand. Few, perhaps, of the current phrases in use among economic writers have been so frequently misinterpreted as those which refer to demand and supply. Few have been more frequently misapplied. It is assumed, as a matter of course, that the one will always be the correlative of the other. That, in short, the desire to possess any material object will not fail in fruition. The many cases in which a natural limitation to indefinite production exists, are quietly overlooked or ignored. A little reflection will show that houses are among the number of what are sometimes termed "excepted productions ;" productions, in short, whose numbers are not governed by the ordinary rules which apply to most other things which can be increased in quantity at pleasure.

That a thing may have any value in exchange two conditions are needed. It must be of some use ; and there must be some difficulty in its attainment. It is even possible that, however useful an object may be, the difficulty of attainment may be so great as to become a complete bar to possession.

* "The Progress of the Nation in its various Social and Economical Relations," by G. R. Porter : London, 1851.

† "A History of Agriculture and Prices in England, from 1259 to 1793," by James E. Thorold Rogers, M.A. : Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1866.

‡ "Annals of Agriculture," &c., Arthur Young : Bury St. Edmunds.

Mr. Mill, in the third book of his "Principles of Political Economy," has illustrated this point with the clearness of language usual to him. Houses, he shows, are within the scope of the limitation.

"The difficulty of attainment which determines value is not always the same kind of difficulty. It sometimes consists in an absolute limitation of the supply. There are things of which it is physically impossible to increase the quantity beyond certain narrow limits. Among such may be reckoned houses and building ground in a town of definite extent (such as Venice, or any fortified town, where fortifications are necessary to security), the most desirable sites in any town whatever."

Now "desirability" is a relative term;—nearness to the docks and the building yards, is as desirable to the labourer and shipwright, as nearness to the courts of law to the barrister and solicitor. And hitherto the mass of the population has had little power of choice in many instances, if there has been a choice at all between a desirable or an undesirable dwelling. There is little reason for doubt, but that if in many localities more houses had been available, more houses would have been occupied. It is true that the proportion of houses to inhabitants has slightly increased during the present century, but by no means in the ratio that might have been expected. A considerable increase might have been expected for three reasons. In the first place, the prosperity of the country has increased greatly. In the next, the burden of taxation is by no means so heavy as it was at the commencement of the century. In the third place, the incidence of that taxation bore very heavily on all building operations whatever. Bricks, tiles, timber, glass, were all subject to heavy dues; and the house itself, when built, had to bear special imposts, more onerous than those existing at present.

II.—*The Increase in Houses not Proportionate to other Progress.*

A complete survey of the social condition of the country, of the position occupied by its people, in comfort, in education and prosperity, would be of the greatest service and of general interest. The difficulties, however, of the task have apparently deterred any one since the death of Mr. Porter, from undertaking to investigate so vast a subject in as complete a manner. This is much to be regretted. A paragraph in one of Mr. Porter's prefaces shows that the writer felt that at no distant period his work must of necessity become out of date:—

"A book which professes to mark the progress of this United Kingdom, in which all the elements of improvement are working with incessant and unceasing energy, requires to be from time to

“time brought under revision, in order to the proper fulfilment of the object which it professes.

“It has been said that any work which should faithfully record the outward progress of England must partake of the nature of a *periodical*, so great are the changes which occur, and so rapidly are they found to succeed each other. This remark may be applied with peculiar propriety to the present time, in which the most zealous advocates of progress may see their hopes outstripped and their most sanguine wishes brought within the reach of accomplishment.”—*Preface to Second Edition of “The Progress of the Nation.”*

The space over which a general inquiry would have to extend has already greatly expanded since Mr. Porter’s death in 1852. And while Mr. Porter’s works retain the value always due to a series of complete and systematic observations, while they still form the most reliable basis of information on many subjects, a wide gap of necessity exists between the latest facts they supply, and the present day.

I therefore propose in this portion of my paper to avail myself of, and to continue the investigations contained in the chapter on “Inhabited Houses.”*

The average number of inhabitants to a house in England at each census in the present century was as follows:—

Average Number of Inhabitants to a House in England.

1801	5·67	1841	5·44
’11	5·68	’51	5·50
’21	5·76	’61	5·39
’31	5·62		

This table certainly gives reason for the belief that, as the excise on bricks was abolished in 1850, the timber duties reduced in 1851, and the window tax repealed in the same year, the effect of the removal of these drawbacks on building is, though dimly, reflected in the improvement shown by the later figures. And on a general view, the population of England was at the date of the last census slightly less crowded for house room than at the commencement of the century. But the advantage gained is only slight. It merely amounts to this, that the position of the population in regard to house room was not worse in 1861, than it was according to Mr. Howlett’s belief in 1780. This is certainly a far different result than might have been expected, if it is compared with the progress certainly made on many other points. It is also probable that this increase of the number of houses has rather benefitted the

* Chapter ii, section v, “Progress of the Nation.”

few than the many. If the condition of Middlesex as a county is investigated, a different result is shown.

Average Number of Inhabitants in a House in Middlesex.

1801	7·25	1841	7·59
'11	7·29	'51	7·88
'21	7·48	'61	7·90
'31	7·52		

A like tendency to a greater density of population exists in the case of London. But London, it may be argued, is a district, not a city with well marked boundaries. The case of Westminster, however, occupying a well-defined area, is not open to this objection; and shows the tendency to a greater crowding in a more marked degree.

*Average Number of Inhabitants to a House in Westminster.**

1821	9·84	1851	10·04
'31	9·79	'61	10·01

This table assists us to understand how little light a general average for the country may throw on the individual position of each inhabitant. Such overcrowding may, in particular instances, be the result of want among the local population. Westminster, it may be argued, has always contained many miserable dwellings within a stone's throw of magnificent mansions. Want may have had much to do with overpacking in Westminster. But this cannot be the case generally. The increased prosperity of the country during the last twenty years is well known. The exports and imports of the country are a sufficient test of this.

It may be urged that a larger foreign trade only proves the greater wealth among some classes, not among the population at large. The fact, however, that not only the absolute amount, but the proportion per head, are largely increased, would alone be sufficient to disprove this. It is certain also that the people generally have earned more money, and have been able to spend more money. They have not only bought more food, but food of a more expensive kind than they used to do.

The following table is derived from one by Mr. Lawes, inserted in Mr. James Caird's very careful paper on "Agricultural Statistics "of the United Kingdom," in the Statistical Society's *Journal*, March, 1869, p. 65.

* "There are no data from which to calculate the proportion of inhabitants to "dwellings in the metropolis earlier than 1821."—G. R. Porter, Statistical Society's *Journal*, vol. iv, p. 283.

Estimated Consumption of Wheat per Head per Annum.

During the Last Sixteen Years.	England and Wales.	Scotland.	Great Britain.	Ireland.	United Kingdom.
	Bushel.	Bushel.	Bushel.	Bushel.	Bushel.
First eight years	5·9	4·2	5·7	2·7	5·1
Second „	6·3	4·2	6·0	3·3	5·5
Average of the whole period	6·1	4·2	5·9	3·0	5·3

“ Converting these figures into pounds, it appears that during “ the first eight years each person consumed at the rate of 311 lbs. “ of wheat, and during the last period 335 lbs.” Meanwhile the consumption of other articles of food than the staff of life, has largely increased. Taxation has been lighter, and, as previously mentioned, the taxes on building materials have been first lightened, and then removed.

Can it be doubted that if more houses had been obtainable, more houses would have been occupied? Can it be doubted that “ difficulty “ of attainment ” has limited and hindered the natural results of an increased demand? While the working classes have been earning more wages, have been spending more on food and drink and clothing, would they not gladly have obtained more house room, had they only been able to do so?

III.—*Information contained in Census Returns, 1861.*

I have endeavoured, but without avail, to extract from the census returns of 1861 some details as to the proportion of inhabitants to houses in different classes of the population. But I have been unable to frame any more exact statement of the proportion of inhabitants to houses in England than that given before. As previously stated, the needful statistics do not exist. The average at the census of 1861 was 5·39 persons to a house. That is to say, about 16 persons to three houses, taking England all round. This is the general average, but there can be no doubt that particular classes are by no means as well lodged. The instances of the different proportion of the increasing density of population in Middlesex and in Westminster probably point to this. Westminster, for more than forty years far beyond the average, increases more rapidly in density than Middlesex. By referring to the comparative statement of paupers relieved in the metropolis in the Christmas quarters for the years 1866-67, it appears that the increase in number in the western district (which includes the united parishes of Westminster) was 34·7 per cent. Metropolitan Middlesex, comparing 1st January, 1866-67, had only increased 26·7 per cent—the

remainder of Middlesex but 6·9 per cent.* These figures confirm the natural belief that the poorer population has a tendency to a greater aggregation.

Tables 32, 33, and 39, given in the "Appendix to the Report on 'the Census of 1861,'"† appeared to promise at first sight the means of tracing the subject further. These tables give the total number of families to a house in fourteen selected subdistricts of England and Wales at that date. They show very clearly how great the variations in the distribution of the population are. The general average of these districts is 5·629 inhabitants to a house. This is but slightly higher than the general average for England and Wales (5·37). But the tables show that, covered by this general average, are great extremes, from 13·930 inhabitants to a house in St. Giles to 4·041 in a subdistrict in Cardigan. These subdistricts being the only ones reported on with such completeness, it occurred to me that it would be desirable to endeavour to ascertain some particulars respecting the rentals of the houses within their limits, and thus investigate the quality of the accommodation afforded to the inhabitants. This endeavour entirely failed, much to my regret.

Most of the subdistricts are merely portions of townships or parishes, and therefore it was impossible for me to obtain any more detailed information about them. In one only, Bury St. Edmunds, was the subdistrict exactly coincident in extent with the Parliamentary borough. I had hoped that a return made to the House of Commons in 1867 of population and rentals within the limits of each Parliamentary borough, would have been of service for the purpose of analysing to a certain extent the quality of the house accommodation in Bury St. Edmunds. But unfortunately for this purpose the principles advocated by Mr. Mill were not in favour with the framers of that return. Had the numbers of all householders been specified, some details would have been possible. But a limitation to "male occupiers" only, frustrated all efforts at a correct analysis.

IV.—*Estimates based on Mr. D. Baxter's Method.*

Though the census of 1861 does not give any basis on which to construct detailed statistics as to the country in general, it is possible to carry the investigation further in some directions. If we apply the principles of investigation adopted in Mr. Dudley Baxter's work‡ on the "National Income of the United Kingdom"

* "Nineteenth Annual Report of the Poor Law Board." London, 1867.

† "Census of England and Wales, 1861," vol. iii: London, 1863.

‡ "National Income of the United Kingdom," by R. Dudley Baxter, M.A.: London, 1868.

to this subject, some further insight may be obtained as to the distribution of the population among the various classes of dwellings. Mr. D. Baxter divides the population into what he terms the upper, and middle, and manual labour classes. In the upper and middle classes, he includes all persons with incomes from about 75*l.* a-year and upwards. In the manual labour classes are all working people, and others with incomes from about 73*l.* and downwards. The total population of England and Wales in 1861 was in round figures 19,900,000,* inhabiting 3,739,505 houses. Dividing the population on the principle named above, there would appear to have been then about

4,700,000 of the upper and middle classes, including those dependent
on them.

15,200,000 of the manual labour class, with the same addition.

Mr. D. Baxter checks his figures by the number of 10*l.* houses in boroughs and counties of England and Wales in the electoral returns of 1866, which was at that time given as 1,250,000. And he considers that about 140,000 of them were occupied by the "manual labour classes." The annual rate of increase in houses appears to be far from uniform in this country: but we may suppose that 1,100,000 houses were occupied by the upper and middle classes in 1861, against 1,110,000 such houses in 1866. The "upper and middle classes" of Mr. D. Baxter's calculations are not, however, the only inhabitants of these houses. The larger proportion of servants, governesses, shop assistants, &c., must live with their employers.

The census of 1861 gives the number of these classes of persons, and it may be safely inferred that fully† 1,360,000 attendants, in some capacity or other, must be deducted from the "lower" and added to the "higher" classes, in the sense of forming part of the same households. With these alterations the figures will be as follows:—

6,060,000 "upper and middle classes," in 1,100,000 houses, 10*l.* and
upwards, with their servants, &c.

13,840,000 "manual labour classes," in 2,639,505 houses below 10*l.*

The proportion of inhabitants to houses is very nearly equal in both of these two great divisions. But there can be no doubt that vast differences in actual fact lie beneath this apparent uniformity.

Following Mr. D. Baxter's method, the manual labour classes in 1861, would be distributed as follows:—

* "Besides 151,000 respecting whom nothing was ascertained."—D. Baxter.

† Summary Tables, XIX and XX, Census 1861, vol. ii.

	Persons.	Dependent.	Total.
CLASS IV.* Higher skilled labour and manufactures } (net annual earnings, 60 <i>l.</i> to 73 <i>l.</i>)	1,065,600	1,123,400	2,189,000
CLASS V. Lower skilled labour and manufactures } (net annual earnings, 46 <i>l.</i> to 52 <i>l.</i>)	3,616,000	3,922,800	7,538,800
CLASS VI. Agricultural and unskilled labour (net } annual earnings, 20 <i>l.</i> to 41 <i>l.</i>)	2,681,700	2,790,500	5,472,200
	—	—	15,200,000

* The number affixed to each class refers to that by which it is designated by Mr. Baxter.

On p. 92 of the third volume of the Census of 1861, will be found a table distributing, by calculation, the number of inhabited houses into various classes; this table assigning to no less than 659,724 houses a rent of 3*l.* and under 5*l.* The lowest class on Mr. D. Baxter's list (No. VI), is that of agriculture and unskilled labour. The net annual earnings of the men in this class are estimated at from 20*l.* to 41*l.* May we take this class of labour to correspond with the 659,724 houses of the census table? Can we imagine men earning such low wages able to afford more expensive dwellings?

If we think they can *not*, and it is difficult to suppose they *can*, we shall find that this class, in 1861, numbered, including those dependent on the earners, about 5,472,200 persons. It is probable, however, that all these individuals might not require to be housed in the 659,724 dwellings.

A considerable reduction must be made for those servants who are the children of persons in this class, and who, being personal attendants, may, in the majority of cases, be reasonably conjectured to be housed by their employers. To arrive at the exact number is impossible, but a fairly approximate estimate may be made. The total number of personal attendants in 1861, probably so housed, was 1,360,000. It is also probable that most of them were the children of persons in Mr. Baxter's manual labour classes. The majority of domestic servants are in all likelihood derived rather from the upper than from the lower strata of the working classes. Assuming them, however, to have been evenly derived, as the numbers in Class VI form about five-fourteenths of the total in the manual labour classes, the corresponding proportion will be 485,710 persons; that is to say, it is probable that 485,710 individuals among the families in Class VI were, at the time of the census, servants in the houses

of persons in a superior station of life. To make this deduction is, of course, to assume that Class VI is consequently far less cramped for house room than as if all these persons remained with their parents and friends. Yet even supposing the 485,710 were all lodged elsewhere, and not in the houses which would appear to be their natural homes, the average density of the population to this class would be, under these the most favourable circumstances, more than 7.50 persons to a house; that house, be it remembered, being of a rental calculated at from 3*l.* to 5*l.* per annum, and giving a proportionately inferior accommodation. This would suppose a density of population in these cases half as much again, roughly speaking (house for house), as that of the upper classes, while the accommodation would probably be less than one-fourth the extent.

The writer would hardly have ventured to put forward this hypothesis, even though based on the figures given above, had not the information obtained in Scotland, at the census of 1861, enabled Mr. Caird to state, "that one-third of the population of Scotland lived, each family, in houses of one room only, another third in houses of two rooms; two-thirds of the whole people being thus found to be lodged in a manner incompatible with comfort and decency, as now understood."—*Statistical Society's Journal*, March, 1869, p. 75.

V.—*Information in Mr. Frazer's Report.*

Some information as to the state of matters in the rural district of England is incidentally afforded in Mr. Frazer's* report on "The Employment of Children, Young Persons, and Women in Agriculture." The details will be found in the Appendix, Part II, containing the evidence from the Assistant Commissioners. At p. 216, and also at p. 218, tables are given, stating the cottage population, and the number of cottages in various groups of rural parishes. The number of rooms in each cottage is likewise given. If the first group is taken, omitting the parish of Swaffham, which, being more a town than a country parish, can scarcely be included in the category, it appears that 2,527 people inhabit 566 houses, a proportion of 4.46 persons to each dwelling. The proportion at first sight appears quite a suitable one. It is considerably *below* the average of England and Wales generally. But if we look further, another and a very different state of things is found to underlie this totally unobjectionable exterior. The table gives no particulars of the number of families. If the number of persons in each family did not exceed the corrected proportion given in

* "Commission on the Employment of Children, Young Persons, and Women in Agriculture, 1867." First Report of the Commissioners: London, 1868.

the third volume of the census of 1861—4·38 to a family—the 2,527 persons would constitute 576 families. For these 576 families there would be only 566 houses; ten, therefore, or the equivalent of ten, families being lodged with their neighbours. In this respect again the housing of these persons is considerably better than the average of England and Wales, “twelve families to ten houses.” “Census 1861, Report,” vol. iii.

But the families themselves would be very differently and unequally lodged:

123	families having cottages with one bedroom.
323	” two bedrooms.
130	” three ”

Or, taking the number of persons—

540	in cottages with one bedroom, about one-fifth.
1,418	” two bedrooms, ” three-fifths.
569	” three ” ” one-fifth.

This proportion is more favourable than that of Scotland, according to Mr. Caird; but it shows how many persons are but indifferently lodged, under an average which appears at the first glance to show an unusually favourable condition.

The second group of parishes, described on p. 218, differs slightly from the one first investigated. It includes fifteen parishes, with a cottage population of 4,751 persons, occupying 1,031 houses. The general average is 4·60 to a house. This, though higher than the last quoted, is yet considerably lower than the general average for England. There would appear on analysis, however, to be 1,085 families (or their equivalents) to 1,031 houses. These families would, if equally apportioned, be distributed thus:—

251	with one bedroom.
691	” two bedrooms.
143	” three ”

Or, taking the number of the individuals—

1,100,	about one quarter, in cottages with one bedroom.
3,026,	” five-eighths ” two bedrooms.
625,	” one-eighth ” three ”

Further particulars of these families, in both groups, will be found in the Appendix to Mr. Frazer's Report. It will be observed that these two groups are exclusively rural parishes; that they are not selected instances; that the tables exclusively refer to the cottage population alone; and that, though in neither case the proportion of individuals with but one bedroom is as low as

Mr. Caird's, in neither does the proportion of those with more than two rise as high as that which he gives for Scotland.

VI.—*Influence of Dwellings on certain Districts.*

It may be desirable to endeavour to ascertain how far the state of the house accommodation in various neighbourhoods is reflected in the condition of the inhabitants. Many individual instances of the prejudicial effect of a low class of dwelling have been recorded, but it is difficult to exhibit the results in a tabular form. Professor Leone Levi,* in his report to Mr. Bass on the wages and earnings of the working classes, has collected a vast deal of information on many collateral subjects. A table is given at p. 10 of that work, "illustrative of the connection which exists between the different occupations and house accommodation, education, health, and drunkenness, and the following is a general summary of the information contained under each branch of occupation."

Industrial Districts.	Rent of Houses in Parliamentary Boroughs.			Education. Signatures by Marks in the Marriage Register.†		Drunken- ness ‡	Mor- tality.†
	Under £7.	£7 to £10.	£10 and Upwards	Males.	Females.		
	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.
England and Wales	30	17	53	23	32	0·50	2·38
Cotton districts	58	18	24	26	57	0·80	2·63
Woollen "	65	9	26	23	51	0·92	2·71
Silk "	48	26	26	19	37	0·47	2·31
Hosiery "	45	23	32	24	34	0·45	2·91
Colliery "	66	16	18	34	47	0·56	2·61
Earthenware districts	60	13	27	35	45	1·02	2·61
Metal districts	67	16	17	32	48	1·07	2·69
Iron mining districts....	41	50	9	48	64	0·67	2·99
Hardware districts.....	33	34	33	29	43	0·46	2·82
Cutlery "	56	18	26	22	36	0·53	2·78

† From the "Report of the Registrar-General of Births, Deaths, and Marriages for 1864."

‡ Proportion of persons proceeded against for drunkenness in 1865, from the "Report on Judicial Statistics, 1866."

The table will show the effect produced by the quality of house accommodation on the various populations more distinctly, if it is

* "Wages and Earnings of the Working Classes; with some Facts illustrative of their Economic Condition, drawn from Authentic and Official Sources, in a Report to Michael T. Bass, Esq., M.P.," by Leone Levi: London, 1867.

rearranged according to the proportion of the poorer householders to the rest of the community.

Industrial Districts.	Rent of Houses in Parliamentary Boroughs under £7.	Drunkenness.	Mortality.	Marks.	
				Men.	Women.
	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.
Hardware districts.....	33	·46	2·82	29	43
Iron mining „	41	·67	2·99	48	64
Hosiery „	45	·45	2·91	24	34
Silk „	48	·47	2·31	19	37
Cutlery „	56	·53	2·78	22	36
Cotton „	58	·80	2·63	26	57
Earthenware „	60	1·02	2·61	35	45
Woollen „	65	·92	2·71	23	51
Colliery „	66	·56	2·61	34	47
Metal „	67	1·07	2·69	32	48

When thus rearranged the districts may be divided into two groups of five districts each, with the following results:—

	£7 Houses.	Drunkenness.	Marks.	
			Men.	Women.
	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.
First group	33 to 56	·51	28	42
Second „	58 „ 67	·87	30	49

The rate of mortality does not exactly follow the same proportion. It is nearly equal in both groups, being slightly higher in the first group. In both divisions the average is greatly beyond that of the United Kingdom generally. Dr. Farr's observations on the relation of density of population to the standard of health are most instructive. They are, however, so well known, that it is not needful to do more than refer to them here.

The average rate of wages, according to Professor Levi, is lower in the first of these groups than in the second. The more poorly paid portion of the population in these contrasted districts has been, therefore, on the average, willing to pay the higher rent, is the less drunken, and the better educated.

The table given immediately above arranged the industrial districts commented on by Professor Levi according to the relative proportion of houses in Parliamentary boroughs under 7*l*. If the houses rented from 7*l*. to 10*l*. are combined with these, the arrangement is slightly altered. The “earthenware” district is found in the group with fewer small houses. The “iron mining” district takes its place in the lower group.

The general results are as follows :—

	£7 to £10 Houses.	Drunkenness.	Marks.	
			Men.	Women.
	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.
First group	67 to 74	·58	25	36
Second „	74 „ 91	·80	32	54

The rate of mortality is slightly lower in the first of these groups than in the second.

Whether the poorest class of houses is taken by itself, or that immediately superior in condition is combined with it, in either case it appears, according to these tables, that a population, whether earning good wages or not, if poorly lodged, will likewise be at a low ebb of education, morality, and health.

VII.—*Summary.*

The preceding remarks have been restricted as closely as possible to the main subject. It is obvious that in many places a vast amount of inequality may and does underlie a general average which appears to imply no marked disproportion between the numbers of the people and their dwellings. It is obvious, also, that the increase in houses since the commencement of the century has but slightly exceeded the increase of the population, and has not kept pace with the progress in other respects. Some facts have been mentioned which show that the quality of the house accommodation of particular districts, has impressed its mark on the population of those districts. That a portion of the population, at least as well off as another portion in most respects, inferior only in the quality of its dwelling places, is at a lower level in education and morality in proportion to that inferiority. More instances might be readily given.

There is in the metropolis alone a population equal in numbers to the inhabitants of many large towns, whose house accommodation is anything but satisfactory. Dr. Hunter's report of 1866 states :
 “ First, that there are about twenty large colonies in London, of
 “ about 10,000 persons each, whose miserable condition exceeds
 “ almost anything he has seen elsewhere in England, and is almost
 “ entirely the result of their bad house accommodation ;—and
 “ secondly, that the crowded and dilapidated condition of the houses
 “ of these colonies is much worse than was the case twenty years
 “ ago.”*

* “ Eighth Report of the Medical Officer of the Privy Council.” London, 1866.

The large colonies alone are mentioned here; to take the smaller examples at half of the large, is probably to understate their amount, adopting that calculation it amounts to this, that the reason of one-tenth of the population of London being miserable and in want, is their "bad house accommodation." It is true that private liberality has done much since that date, but it is probable that the condition of these particular districts is not much ameliorated. Nor is the country at large free from this misfortune, as shown by the statistics given from the appendix to Mr. Frazer's report, and many pages might be filled from the remarks of highly qualified observers.

It is so usual to regard the course of events in this country as one of continued progress, that it requires some little effort to realize that the progress, though great, has been far from uniform. The history of the social condition of the population shows many variations, frequently continued over long periods. If even no greater a length of time than the last century and a half is examined, it will be found to contain many alternate successions of welfare and of want. "The period of fifty years, from 1715 to 1765, " was characterised by a marked exemption from seasons of scarcity, " compared with the fifty years preceding."* This "exemption " from seasons of scarcity " was accurately marked in the condition of the people; so was the entirely opposite character of the years 1765-75. From the latter date to 1792 the seasons appear to have been irregular. The twenty years, 1795-1815, were a period of great depression. Since that date there has been much improvement, followed by a check in quite recent years. But it is impossible to compare the Great Britain of 1869 with that of 1765, otherwise than in the most general way, in these points. If modern legislation has done much to alleviate the distress inevitable on a series of "seasons of scarcity," it must be remembered that enlarged facilities in other respects, and, foremost, increased freedom of locomotion, will for the future exercise a great influence at all periods of depression. Emigration at such times must be looked for. And it is possible that the time may not be far distant when emigration may no longer be looked on as a panacea for all distress. Meanwhile it is scarcely likely that the active, the intelligent, the pick of the population, will be retained, unless they can obtain in this country those comforts which decent accommodation in house room alone can afford.

The question also suggests itself, may not the generally indifferent house accommodation of the working classes, be a main reason why the prosperity of the last few years has left so few

* "A History of Prices, and of the State of the Circulation from 1793 to " 1837," &c., by Thomas Tooke: London, 1838.

permanent results? There can be no doubt that the population at large earns larger wages than twenty or thirty years ago. But the improvement in house accommodation has not kept pace with improvement in other respects, though it is probable that the outlay in the shape of rent forms at least as large a proportion of the general out-goings now as at an earlier date. The great increase in pauperism since 1866 shows a lamentable want of thrift among the wage-earning classes. May not a deficiency of respectable homes prevent the formation of thrifty habits? What may be termed the moral evidence on the subject is abundantly provided by the reports of Mr. Frazer, Mr. Baker, and Dr. Simon. The statistical evidence is now required, and it is clear that no sufficient data yet exist, on which to ground any satisfactory investigation.

This information might without difficulty be obtained at the census of 1871. There would be no need to go into details so minute as to cause great additional outlay. A strict yet simple definition of a house is not easily arrived at, but without requiring statements which it might be inconvenient to give, much valuable information might be obtained. To inquire whether each family inhabited one, two, or more rooms would be sufficient for the purpose, nor would it be needful to specify any larger number than two. It would be sufficient to assimilate the householder's schedules for England and Wales with those of Scotland, of 1861, on this point.

Should the cost of the investigation be thought a hindrance, I may mention that I understand the expense of the Scotch census of 1861, when this point was first inquired into, was, through careful management, reduced below the cost in 1851.

The desirability of a closer inquiry into the state of house accommodation in this country was noticed both in Mr. Caird's paper, previously referred to, and in that of Mr. Welton. The President in his inaugural address of this session, deprecated, for obvious reasons, any material departure from the precedents of 1851 and 1861. The inquiry now proposed can hardly be objected to on this score; while the information it would afford, might materially assist in diminishing the waste of "energy, intelligence, and life," to which Mr. Newmarch eloquently referred at the close of his paper.
